

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

In re the Application of:

Isao YAGASAKI et al.

Serial No. 09/749,720

Group Art Unit: 3639

Confirmation No. 6774

Filed: December 28, 2000

Examiner: I. Borissov

For: MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATION PROCESSING SYSTEM AND METHOD THEREOF

APPEAL BRIEF

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

I. Real Party in Interest

The inventors Isao YAGASAKI and Toshimitsu KURODA assigned all rights in the subject application to FUJITSU LIMITED on December 8, 2000 according to the Assignment executed December 8, 2000 and submitted for recordation on December 28, 2000 which is recorded at Reel 11787, Frames 698-700. Therefore, the real party in interest is FUJITSU LIMITED.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences known to Appellants, Appellants' legal representatives or the Assignee, FUJITSU LIMITED, which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

III. Status of Claims

Claims 1-13 are pending in the application; claim 13 was rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112; claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e); claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a); and the prior art rejections of claims 1-13 are being appealed.

IV. Status of Amendments

An Amendment was filed December 31, 2007 addressing the rejection of claim 13 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 in the June 1, 2007 Office Action, but no decision on whether the Amendment will be entered has been received or is indicated in PAIR as of January 29, 2008.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The application is directed to determining membership qualification for a plurality of services by one or more users who already subscribe(s) to at least one of the services, i.e., is a "member" of a "joined service" (page 8, lines 8-13; Figs. 3A-4). In response to a request from a user, the system displays available service(s) for which the user meets the membership condition(s) (page 34, line 10 to page 40, line 22; Figs 14, 15 and 17), or simulates such requests to generate a list of users that meet membership condition(s) for service(s) to which they do not subscribe (pages 47-50; Figs. 2, 24 and 25). Thus it is possible to determine the number of users who are eligible for unused service(s) (page 49, line 18 to page 50, line 22; Fig. 25).

Claim 4

The first independent claim, claim 4, is directed to a "processing system" (claim 4, line 1) as described, for example at page 9, line 16 to page 11, line 3 of the application and illustrated in Fig. 2. This system includes "a storing device storing a plurality of membership qualification tables of a plurality of independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations in a membership qualification system" (claim 4, lines 2-4). An example of the storing device is represented by the box with reference characters S21 in Fig. 2 and service management DB 52 shown in Fig. 10 (see page 12, lines 17-19). As described for example at page 34, line 1 to page 36, line 15, membership qualification tables like that in Fig. 13 are stored in service management DB 52 of server 42 (see page 34, line 1) for services provided by business organizations (see, e.g., page 31, lines 1-3 and the "COMPANY ID" column in Fig. 13). As recited on lines 4-9 of claim 4,

each of the ... membership qualification tables include[es] qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service, and identification information of a first service of the plurality of services being included by qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a second service of the plurality of services for indicating the prescribed service,

for example, as illustrated in Fig. 13 and described at page 35, line 18 to page 36, line 6.

The processing system recited in claim 4 also includes "a receiving device receiving information of a user for whom membership qualification is performed" (claim 4, lines 10-11), for example, server 32 as described at page 17, lines 3-4, with reference to Fig. 4.

In addition, the processing system recited in claim 4 includes "a first determining device determining, in response to the information of the user, whether the user is utilizing the first service when the user wants to become a member of the second service" (claim 4, lines 12-14), for example, as represented by the block with reference characters S24 in Fig. 2, as described at page 10, lines 5-15, which corresponds to certificate managing portion 51 in Fig. 10 (see page 12, lines 21-25).

Finally, the processing system recited in claim 4 includes a second determining device determining that the user has a membership qualification for the second service by referring to the membership qualification table of the second service and checking that the identification information of the first service is included in the qualification criterion information of the second service when the user is utilizing the first service (claim 4, last 4 lines), for example, as represented by the block with reference characters S25 in Fig. 2 and by certificate managing portion 51 in Fig. 10, which perform the operations described at page 39, lines 2-13 with reference to Fig. 15, or at page 43, lines 13-22, with reference to Fig. 18.

As noted in the paragraph spanning pages 50 and 51, server 42 (Fig. 10) which includes certificate managing portion 51 and service management DB 52, can be composed of an information processing unit (computer) having a CPU 111, a memory 112, an input device 113, an output device 114, an external storing device 115, a medium driving device 116, and a network connecting device 117 connected by a bus 118 as illustrated in Fig. 27.

Claim 6

The second independent claim, claim 6, is also directed to a "processing system" (claim 6, line 1) which in this case is described, for example at page 11, line 4 to page 12, line 25, of the application and illustrated in Fig. 2. This system includes

a storing device storing a plurality of service tables of a plurality of existing independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations in a membership qualification system, each of the plurality of service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service of the plurality of existing services

(claim 6, lines 2-5), for example, as represented by the block with reference characters S21 in Fig. 2, as described at page 11, lines 7-9 and by service management DB 52 in Fig. 10 which stores the service table illustrated in Fig. 12, as described at page 34, line 23 to page 35, line 17.

The processing system recited in claim 6 also includes "a designating device designating a new membership condition" (claim 6, line 6), for example, as represented by block S26 in Fig. 2, as described at page 11, lines 9-10 and in more detail at page 50, lines 18-21, and page 47, lines 4-11, for the flowchart of the simulation process in Fig. 24, and corresponds to user terminal unit 50 of Fig. 10 (see page 47, line 6).

In addition, the processing system recited in claim 6 also includes

a simulating device comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services with the new membership condition, adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service, and obtaining new member information about a number of users who can become members of another service corresponding to the new membership condition by counting a number of pieces of information contained in the member count table

(claim 6, lines 7-13), for example, as represented by the block with reference characters S27 in Fig. 2, as described at page 11, lines 11-16. As noted in the last paragraph on page 12, the simulating device 27 corresponds to certificate managing portion 51 of server 42 in Fig. 10. The operations performed by certificate managing portion 51 in the simulation process illustrated in Fig. 24 are described at page 47, line 12 to page 50, line 7.

Finally, the processing system recited in claim 6 includes "an output device outputting the new member information about the number of the users" (claim 6, last line), for example, as represented by the block with reference characters S28 in Fig. 2, as described at page 11, line 17, which corresponds to certificate managing portion 51 of server 42 in Fig. 10 (see page 12, lines 23-25).

As noted in the paragraph spanning pages 50 and 51, user terminal unit 50 and server 42 (Fig. 10) which includes certificate managing portion 51 and service management DB 52, can be composed of an information processing unit (computer) having a CPU 111, a memory 112, an input device 113, an output device 114, an external storing device 115, a medium driving device 116, and a network connecting device 117 connected by a bus 118 as illustrated in Fig. 27.

Claim 9

The third independent claim, claim 9, is directed to a "computer-readable recording medium on which a program for a computer is recorded, said program causing the computer to perform a method" (claim 9, lines 1-2), for example as described at page 53, lines 7-18, with reference to Figs. 27 and 28. The method performed by the computer includes "receiving information of a user for whom membership qualification is performed" (claim 9, line 3), for example, as represented by block S41 in Fig. 18 and described at page 42, lines 12-15.

The next operation in the method performed by the computer recited in claim 9 is determining whether the user is utilizing a first service in a membership qualification system using membership qualification tables of independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations ..., when the user wants to become a member of a second service in the membership qualification system based on the identification information of the first service included in the qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of the second service (claim 9, lines 4-12), for example, as represented by block S42 in Fig. 18 and as described at page 42, lines 12-19. The content of "each of the membership qualification tables" (claim 9, line 6) is recited as "including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service" (claim 9, lines 6-9), as illustrated in Fig. 13 and described at page 35, line 18 to page 36, line 6.

The final operation in the method performed by the computer recited in claim 9 is determining that the user has a membership qualification for the second service by referring to the membership qualification table of the second service and checking that the identification information of the first service is included in the qualification criterion information of the second service when the user is utilizing the first service (claim 9, last 4 lines), for example, as represented by block S45 in Fig. 18 and as described at page 43, lines 14-17.

Claim 10

The fourth independent claim, claim 10, is directed to a "computer-readable recording medium on which at least one program for a computer is recorded" (claim 10, lines 1-2), for example as described at page 53, lines 7-18, with reference to Figs. 27 and 28. The at least one program recited in claim 10 causes the computer to perform operations starting with "storing service tables of existing independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations, each of the service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service of the existing services" (claim 10, lines 3-5), for example, as illustrated in Fig. 12 and described at page 35, lines 3-11.

The next operation performed according to claim 10 is "designating a new membership condition" (claim 10, line 6), for example, as described at page 11, lines 18-22 or page 47, lines 7-10. Then, "comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services in a membership qualification system with the new membership condition" (claim 10, lines 7-8) is performed, for example, as indicated by blocks S63 to S69 in Fig. 24, as described at page 47, line 13 to page 49, line 17.

The next operation performed according to claim 10 is "adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service" (claim 10, lines 9-11), for example, as indicated by blocks S64 to S68 in Fig. 24, as described at page 48, line 4 to page 49, line 11.

The next operation performed according to claim 10 is "obtaining new member information about a number of users who can become members of another service corresponding to the new membership condition by counting a number of pieces of information contained in the member count table" (claim 10, lines 12-14), for example, as indicated by block S70 in Fig. 24, as described at page 49, lines 19-22.

The final operation performed according to claim 10 is "outputting the new member information about the number of the users" (claim 10, line 15), for example, as indicated by block S71 in Fig. 24, as described at page 49, lines 22-23.

Claim 12

The fifth independent claim, claim 12, is directed to a "processing method" (claim 12, line 1), for example, as illustrated in Figs. 18 and 19. The method recited in claim 12 starts by

referencing qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a first service in a membership qualification system using membership qualification tables of independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations ..., when a user wants to become a member of the first service (claim 12, lines 2-8), for example, as described at page 34, lines 1-5 and page 42, lines 12-15. The content of "each of the membership qualification tables" (claim 12, lines 4-5) is recited as "including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service" (claim 12, lines 5-7), as illustrated in Fig. 13 and described at page 35, line 18 to page 36, line 6.

The next operation performed according to claim 12 is "receiving information of a user for whom membership qualification is performed" (claim 12, line 9), for example, as represented by block S41 in Fig. 18 and described at page 42, lines 12-15.

The next operation performed according to claim 12 is "determining, in response to the information of the user, whether the user is utilizing a second service in the membership qualification system based on the identification information of the second service included in the qualification criterion information" (claim 12, lines 10-12), for example, as represented by block S42 in Fig. 18 and as described at page 42, lines 12-19.

The final two operations performed according to claim 12 are determining that the user has a membership qualification for the first service by referring to the membership qualification table of the first service and checking that the identification information of the second service is included in the qualification criterion information of the first service when the user is utilizing the second service (claim 12, lines 13-16), for example, as represented by block S45 in Fig. 18 and as described at page 43, lines 14-17, and "displaying a qualification result on a screen" (claim 12, last line), for example, as represented by block S46 in Fig. 18 and as described at page 43, lines 21-22.

Claims 13

The final independent claim, claim 13 as amended in the Amendment filed December 31, 2007, is directed to a "processing method for identifying a number of users meeting a membership condition for a service" (claim 13, lines 1-2), for example, as illustrated in Fig. 24. The method recited in claim 13 starts by "storing service tables of existing independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations, each of the service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service of the existing services" (claim 13, lines 3-5), for example, as illustrated in Fig. 12 and described at page 35, lines 3-11.

The next operation performed according to claim 13 is "designating a new membership condition" (claim 13, line 6), for example, as described at page 11, lines 18-22 or page 47, lines 7-13. Then, "comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services in a membership qualification system with the new membership condition" (claim 13, lines 7-8) is performed, for example, as indicated by blocks S63 to S69 in Fig. 24, as described at page 47, line 13 to page 49, line 17.

The next operation performed according to claim 13 is "adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service" (claim 13, lines 9-11), for example, as indicated by blocks S64 to S68 in Fig. 24, as described at page 41, line 4 to page 49, line 11.

The next operation performed according to claim 13 is "obtaining new member information about a number of users who can become members of another service corresponding to the new membership condition by counting a number of pieces of information contained in the member count table" (claim 13, lines 12-14), for example, as indicated by block S70 in Fig. 24, as described at page 49, lines 19-22.

The final operation performed according to claim 13 is "outputting the new member information about the number of the users" (claim 13, line 15), for example, as indicated by block S71 in Fig. 24, as described at page 49, lines 22-23.

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

In the final Office Action dated June 1, 2007, claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,505,168 to Rothman et al. (Reference B in the October 10, 2006 Office Action) and claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rothman et al. At issue is whether Rothman et al. anticipates claims 1-10 or suggests all of the limitations recited in claims 11-13.

In addition, claim 13 was rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 due to the wording of the preamble. As noted above, an Amendment was filed December 31, 2007 addressing the rejection of claim 13 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 in the June 1, 2007 Office Action and therefore, this rejection is not being appealed.

VII. Argument

Claims 1-10

On pages 2-7 of the June 1, 2007 Office Action, claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as anticipated by Rothman et al. using the same words as in the Office Action mailed August 10, 2006. As discussed in the Amendment filed March 9, 2007, the Examiner has asserted that the preference engine 22 (Fig. 4) and preference database 24 (which contains sorted customer information as described in column 10, lines 21-33 of Rothman et al.) disclosed all of the features of the storing device recited on lines 2-9 of claim 4. However, the customer information 18 input to preference engine 22 and stored after sorting in preference database 24 is described only as including "previous credit card transactions, customer profiles, customer applications, and other information" (column 10, lines 29-31). There is no suggestion in this list of data and no suggestion has been found elsewhere in Rothman et al. of anything related to "membership qualification" (claim 4, line 2). In fact, no form of the word "member" or its synonyms, "associate" and "affiliate", have been found in Rothman et al.

As a result, it is submitted that Rothman et al. is not particularly relevant to the present invention, let alone anticipatory. All of the independent claims recite a system or method (directly or as embodied by a computer-readable medium) in which the term "membership qualification" or "membership condition" appears. In addition, claims 4, 9 and 12 recite "membership qualification tables including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership" (e.g., claim 4, lines 4-5) and claims 6 and 13 recite "comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services ... with the new membership condition" (e.g., claim 6, lines 7-8). In rejecting claim 6, it was asserted that this comparison was taught by column 10, lines 21-39 of Rothman et al. However, the additional lines 32-39 of column 10 merely describe "match engine 30 [which] combines relevant customer information from the account database 28 and classified offers 16 to form a match table 32" (column 10, lines 37-39). No explanation was provided in the rejection of claims 1-10 why the Examiner believes that matching customers with offers constitutes membership qualification as recited in all of the independent claims.

In addition, claim 4 recites "determining, in response to the information of the user, whether the user is utilizing the first service **when the user wants to become a member of the second service**" (lines 12-14, emphasis added), claim 9 recites "determining whether the user is utilizing a first service in a membership qualification system ... **when the user wants to become a member of a second service in the membership qualification system**" (lines 4-

10, emphasis added) and claim 12 recites "referencing qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a first service in a membership qualification system ... **when a user wants to become a member of the first service**" (lines 2-8, emphasis added). Nothing has been cited or found in Rothman et al. that teaches or suggests doing anything in response to a desire of a user. All that Rothman et al. discloses is ranking offers to be sent to customers without receiving anything from the customers indicating an interest in such offers.

For the above reasons, it is submitted that claims 4, 6, 9 and 10 as well as claims 1-3, 5, 7 and 8 which depend therefrom, patentably distinguish over Rothman et al.

Claims 11-13

On pages 7-10 of the June 1, 2007 Office Action, claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rothman et al. In rejecting claim 12, column 10, lines 21-33 of Rothman et al. was once again cited, this time as disclosing "qualification criterion information for qualifying membership" (claim 12, line 2) and all of the operations on the qualification criterion information recited in claim 12. As discussed above, no hint of "membership qualification" (claim 12, line 3) has been found in the cited portion of Rothman et al. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 12 and claim 11 which depends therefrom patentably distinguishes over Rothman et al. for the reasons discussed above.

In rejecting claim 13, the oval labeled "CLASSIFIED OFFERS" and assigned reference numeral 16 in Fig. 4 of Rothman et al. was cited as disclosing "designating a new membership condition" (claim 13, line 6). No explanation was provided regarding how offers to customers constitute a "membership condition" as recited in the claims.

Furthermore, the Office Action asserted that the words "MATCH ENGINE" in block 30 of Fig. 4 of Rothman et al. discloses "comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services in a membership qualification system with the new membership condition" (claim 13, lines 7-8). It is submitted that this is absurd. The mere words "match engine" cannot possibly disclose all of the operations recited in line 7-8 of claim 13. Even when the corresponding description of the match engine at column 10, lines 37-39 is added, together with the explanation of what constitutes "relevant customer information" (column 10, lines 37-38) and "classified offers 16" (claim 10, line 38) are also added, it is submitted that there is no suggestion of the limitations recited on lines 7-8 of claim 13. No suggestion has been found of anything relating to membership conditions or membership qualification as recited on line 7-8 of claim 13.

For the above reasons, it is submitted that claim 13 patentably distinguishes over Rothman et al.

"Response to Arguments" Provided in June 1, 2007 Office Action

In response to the above arguments in the Substitute Amendment filed March 9, 2007, the Response to Arguments section on pages 10-11 of the June 1, 2007 Office Action asserted that Rothman et al. disclosed that "the user is awarded with a second service if it is determined that the user is qualified to receive the second service" (Office Action, page 10, lines 24-25), by disclosing "storing customer information including previous credit card transactions and customer profiles, and determining based on said stored information whether the customer is qualified for the second service by referring to the matching table" citing Fig. 4 and column 10, lines 21-39 of Rothman et al. However, Fig. 4 is a block diagram of a system that does not disclose sufficient details of what operations are performed to provide any hint of what is recited in the independent claims of the subject application and the cited portion of column 10 merely states:

FIG. 4 illustrates a system 10 according to an embodiment of the invention. Original offers 12 are sent through a classification tool 16, thereby creating classified offers 16. Various types of customer information 18 is input into a preference engine 20, which may comprise a plurality of processors 22. According to an embodiment of the invention, each type of customer information 18 has a separate processor 22. Customer information 18, as described above, may include previous credit card transactions, customer profiles, customer applications, and other information. Customer information 18 is sorted into a preference database 24, which may comprise a plurality of output databases 26. According to an embodiment of the invention, output from each processor 22 is placed into a separate output database 26. Relevant customer information is combined into customer accounts in an account database 28. A match engine 30 combines relevant customer information from the account database 28 and classified offers 16 to form a match table 32. Match table 32 may rank various classified offers with respect to each account.

It is submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not find it obvious from this disclosure in Rothman et al. to develop a system, method or program for controlling a computer to generate "membership qualification tables including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service" (claim 4, lines 4-7), or "membership qualification tables of independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations, each of the membership qualification tables including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service" (claim 9, lines 5-7 and claim 12, lines 3-6), or to

compar[e] each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services with the new membership condition, adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service (claim 6, lines 7-10), or to perform the operations recited on lines 3-14 of claims 10 and 13. All that the cited portion of column 10 in Rothman et al. teaches is matching "customer information from the account database 28 and classified offers" and then ranking the offers for each account, not matching conditions or qualifications for one service with the conditions or qualifications of another service to determine which additional services a user can add, or how many users qualify for additional services.

Furthermore, it is well established by case law that as stated in MPEP § 2111, an Examiner is to determine the scope of claims in patent applications not solely on the basis of the claim language, but upon giving claims their broadest reasonable construction "in light of the specification as it would be interpreted by one of ordinary skill in the art." *In re Am. Acad. of Sci. Tech. Ctr.*, 367 F.3d 1359, 1364 (Fed. Cir. 2004). The specification of the present application on page 2, lines 11-13, states that "[w]hen one user uses a plurality of network services, the user should take a membership qualification for each service." It is submitted that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not interpret "[m]atch table 32 may rank various classified offers with respect to each account" (Rothman et al., column 10, lines 39-40), as "a membership qualification for each service, which is performed when a user uses a plurality of services" as disclosed in the application, or

determining that the user has a membership qualification for the second service by referring to the membership qualification table of the second service and checking that the identification information of the first service is included in the qualification criterion information of the second service when the user is utilizing the first service

as recited on the last four lines of claim 4, or as member[ship] condition(s) or qualification(s) are recited on lines 7-13 of claim 6, or on lines 4-12 of claim 9, or on lines 9-11 of claim 10, or lines 13-16 of claim 12, or lines 3-11 of claim 13.

Summary of Arguments

For the reasons set forth above, it is submitted that claims 1-13 patentably distinguish over Rothman et al. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's final rejection of the claims is without support and, therefore, erroneous. Accordingly, the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences is respectfully urged to so find and to reverse the Examiner's final rejection.

Please charge the required fee in the amount of \$510.00 to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935. If any additional fees are required, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: January 29, 2008

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VIII. Claims Appendix

1. The processing system as set forth in claim 4,
wherein said storing device stores a plurality of service tables of the services, each of which includes a membership condition of a corresponding service,
wherein said receiving device receives from the user a request to present an available membership service for the user, and
wherein said processing system further comprises:
 - a selecting device extracting, from among the plurality of service tables, a first membership condition from a service table of a current service of which the user has become a member, and a second membership condition from at least one service table of at least one other service of which the user has not become a member in response to the request, comparing the first and second membership conditions, and selecting an eligible service of which the user can become a member; and
 - a presenting device presenting information to the user about the eligible service of which the user can become a member.
2. The processing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein when the user is a member of at least two services, said selecting device totals membership conditions of the at least two services using an AND operation and compares a totaled membership condition with the second membership condition of the service of which the user has not become a member.
3. The processing system as set forth in claim 2,
further comprising a registering device registering common certificate information that is in common with the at least two services, wherein said receiving device receives certificate information of the user, and
wherein, when the certificate information of the user corresponds to the common certificate information, said selecting device obtains the membership conditions of the at least two services based on the certificate information of the user.
4. A processing system, comprising:
 - a storing device storing a plurality of membership qualification tables of a plurality of independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations in a membership qualification system, each of the plurality of membership qualification tables

including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service, and identification information of a first service of the plurality of services being included by qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a second service of the plurality of services for indicating the prescribed service;

a receiving device receiving information of a user for whom membership qualification is performed;

a first determining device determining, in response to the information of the user, whether the user is utilizing the first service when the user wants to become a member of the second service; and

a second determining device determining that the user has a membership qualification for the second service by referring to the membership qualification table of the second service and checking that the identification information of the first service is included in the qualification criterion information of the second service when the user is utilizing the first service.

5. The processing system as set forth in claim 4,

further comprising a registering device registering certificate information for a service that the user is utilizing,

wherein said receiving device receives identification information of the certificate information of the user, and

wherein when the identification information corresponds to the registered certificate information, said first determining device obtains information about the service that the user is utilizing based on the identification information and determines whether or not the user is utilizing the first service.

6. A processing system, comprising:

a storing device storing a plurality of service tables of a plurality of existing independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations in a membership qualification system, each of the plurality of service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service of the plurality of existing services;

a designating device designating a new membership condition;

a simulating device comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services with the new membership condition, adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition

satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service, and obtaining new member information about a number of users who can become members of another service corresponding to the new membership condition by counting a number of pieces of information contained in the member count table; and

an output device outputting the new member information about the number of the users.

7. The processing system as set forth in claim 6,

further comprising a registering device registering a plurality of pieces of certificate information of the plurality of users who are utilizing the existing services,

wherein said simulating device adds certificate information of the users who are the members of the existing service to the member count table when the new membership condition satisfies the old membership condition of the existing service, counts a number of the pieces of certificate information contained in the member count table, and obtains the number of users who can become the members of the other service corresponding to the new membership condition.

8. A computer-readable recording medium as set forth in claim 9,

wherein by said receiving the computer receives from the user a request to present an available membership service for the user, and

wherein said method further comprises:

extracting, in response to the request, from among a plurality of service tables of the services, each of which includes a first membership condition of a current service of which the user has become a member, and a second membership condition from at least one service table of at least one other service of which the user has not become a member;

comparing the first and second membership conditions;

selecting an eligible service of which the user can become a member; and

presenting information to the user about the eligible service of which the user can become a member.

9. A computer-readable recording medium on which a program for a computer is recorded, said program causing the computer to perform a method comprising:

receiving information of a user for whom membership qualification is performed;

determining whether the user is utilizing a first service in a membership qualification system using membership qualification tables of independent services provided by a plurality of

respective different organizations, each of the membership qualification tables including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service, when the user wants to become a member of a second service in the membership qualification system based on the identification information of the first service included in the qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of the second service; and

determining that the user has a membership qualification for the second service by referring to the membership qualification table of the second service and checking that the identification information of the first service is included in the qualification criterion information of the second service when the user is utilizing the first service.

10. A computer-readable recording medium on which at least one program for a computer is recorded, said at least one program causing the computer to perform:

storing service tables of existing independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations, each of the service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service of the existing services;

designating a new membership condition;

comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services in a membership qualification system with the new membership condition;

adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service;

obtaining new member information about a number of users who can become members of another service corresponding to the new membership condition by counting a number of pieces of information contained in the member count table; and

outputting the new member information about the number of the users.

11. The processing method as set forth in claim 12,

wherein said storing includes storing a plurality of service tables of the services, each of the service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service,

wherein said receiving includes receiving from the user a request to present an available membership service for the user,

wherein said processing method further comprises:

extracting, in response to the request, from among the plurality of service tables, a first membership condition from a service table of a current service of which the user has become a member and a second membership condition from at least one service table of at least one other service of which the user has not become a member;

comparing the first and second membership conditions; and

selecting an eligible service of which the user can become a member, and

wherein said displaying includes displaying information about the eligible service of which the user can become a member on the screen.

12. A processing method, comprising:

referencing qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a first service in a membership qualification system using membership qualification tables of independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations, each of the membership qualification tables including qualification criterion information for qualifying membership of a corresponding service and defining a prescribed service of which a user ought to be a member to have a membership qualification for the corresponding service, when a user wants to become a member of the first service;

receiving information of a user for whom membership qualification is performed;

determining, in response to the information of the user, whether the user is utilizing a second service in the membership qualification system based on the identification information of the second service included in the qualification criterion information;

determining that the user has a membership qualification for the first service by referring to the membership qualification table of the first service and checking that the identification information of the second service is included in the qualification criterion information of the first service when the user is utilizing the second service; and

displaying a qualification result on a screen.

13. A processing method for identifying a number of users meeting a membership condition for a service, comprising:

storing service tables of existing independent services provided by a plurality of respective different organizations, each of the service tables including a membership condition of a corresponding service of the existing services;

designating a new membership condition;

comparing each membership condition of the service tables of the existing services in a

membership qualification system with the new membership condition;

adding information of users who are members of an existing service to a member count table when the new membership condition satisfies an old membership condition of the existing service;

obtaining new member information of a number of users that can become members of another service corresponding to the new membership condition by counting a number of pieces of information contained in the member count table; and

displaying the new member information about the number of the users on a screen.

IX. Evidence Appendix

(None)

X. Related Proceedings Appendix

(None)